

# Introduction

This manual is for architects, building contractors, food service equipment dealers, food service operators, consultants and other interested professionals. The purpose of this manual is to help in the development of plans to meet the standards of the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department.

This guide states the minimum physical necessities for a new or remodeled restaurant, deli, tavern, or other food establishment. It is not an exhaustive list of the sanitation requirements and does not cover issues related to zoning, planning, building, fire and many other requirements. This is a guide only. More extensive information may be required for your proposed operation.

The **LINCOLN FOOD CODE** (Lincoln Municipal Code, Chapter 8.20) requires that plans be submitted for review when a food establishment is constructed or extensively remodeled. All construction must conform to standards set forth in the **NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS IN NEBRASKA** as adopted by reference pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statutes, section 81-2,257.01 Nebraska Food Code. A copy of this code is available upon request and is highly recommended reading before developing your restaurant plans.

There is no cost to you for the LLCHD plan review, other than the cost of the permit, after the facility passes final inspection.

This document is intended to assist you in filling out the **FOOD FACILITY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION CHECKLIST**. Its contents are arranged in the same order as the checklist.

This process is set up as a self-diagnostic plan review. It is hoped that the plan review process will help to correct any problems during the design stage of the project. Following the guidelines will help to eliminate complications and possible delays when it is time for final inspection of your facility.

**LMC 8.20.262 Food Establishment, Food Processing Plant, or Salvage Operation; Construction, Conversion, or Remodeling; Plans and Specifications; Requirements.**

Prior to construction of, conversion to, or remodeling of a food establishment, food processing plant, or salvage operation, properly prepared plans and specifications for such construction, conversion, or remodeling shall be submitted to the Health Director for review and approval. The plans and specifications shall indicate the proposed layout, arrangement, mechanical plans, construction materials of work areas, type and model of proposed fixed equipment and facilities, and description of the type of food to be served or sold. Information submitted for review that the applicant designates as "confidential" and that is not submitted to other city departments or otherwise a public record under applicable law shall be treated by the Health Director as records that contain material that may be exempt from disclosure under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712.05(3), because disclosure could reasonably be expected to give advantage to business competitors and serve no public purpose. The Health Director's acceptance of such information shall neither constitute, nor be construed as an agreement or acquiescence by the Health Director that the designation is necessary, appropriate, or justified in any way. If any party requests the Health Director to disclose the information or brings suit seeking to compel disclosure of the information, the Health Director's sole obligation hereunder is to promptly notify the applicant of the request. The Health Director shall review and approve the plans and specifications according to the requirements of the Lincoln Food Code. No food establishment, food processing plant, or salvage operation shall be constructed, converted, or remodeled except in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the Health Director. (Ord.17476 §15; March 1, 1999).

Please remember that your food facility will not be issued a permit to operate until all State of Nebraska and LLCHD codes are met. Please help us to help you have a smooth opening by providing as much information at the planning stage as possible.

This **LLCHD GUIDE TO FOOD ESTABLISHMENT DESIGN** is provided to assist you in selecting the proper equipment to meet the needs of your business. Our objective is for you to create a food service facility that is easy to maintain, has efficient food flow patterns, and is set up to handle the maximum number of customers.

The layout and design of the plans are to be based on HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) quality assurance concepts. An excellent way to begin a self-assessment of your needs is to first determine the menu you plan to provide your customers, and then to utilize this menu to list the specific steps in the food preparation process for each menu item, which generally include:

- defining whether specific food items are potentially hazardous
- determining how food items are received into your facility
- deciding the storage method and length of time food items are to be stored prior to preparation
- reviewing how foods are to be prepared (e.g., cooked to order, as opposed to prepared in advance of order), including an assessment of necessary cooking, cooling, and holding methods
- determining the extent of necessary hand contact by food preparation workers during the preparation and serving stages
- ensuring that all food items are maintained at proper temperatures throughout these processes until service.

Keeping these specific needs in mind as you read the various sections of this guide will allow you to design an establishment layout that will meet your needs, as well as meeting the requirements of applicable regulations. Our goal is to provide you with helpful information that will enable you to design the best food service facility possible. Lincoln and the surrounding local municipalities in Lancaster County have building, zoning, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection requirements. You should contact these other agencies before construction, for information on their regulations.

Should you have any questions during the planning or construction process, please contact your area Registered Environmental Health Specialist at LLCHD, (402) 441-6280.